

Office of National Drug Control Policy

Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse

State of Rhode Island

Profile of Drug Indicators

September 2003



ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse staff compiled this profile by using the most recent data available from open sources. The data presented are as accurate as the sources from which they were drawn. The information contained in this profile should not be used to rank or compare States or jurisdictions, due to differences in data collection and reporting methods.

Rhode Island

The following profile contains information on demographics, political figures, programs, crime, drug use, drug trafficking, and enforcement statistics.

Demographics¹

- Population: 1,069,725 (2002 Census estimate); 1,048,319 (2000 Census)
- Race/Ethnicity (2000 Census): 89.1% white; 4.0% black/African American; 0.4% American Indian/Alaska Native; 2.2% Asian; 0.0% Native Hawaiian/other Pacific Islander; 0.8% some other race; 2.0% two or more races; 8.7% Hispanic/Latino (any race)

Politics

- Governor: Donald Carcieri²
- Lieutenant Governor: Charles J. Fogarty³
- Attorney General: Patrick Lynch⁴
- Secretary of State: Matthew Brown⁵
- U.S. Senators: Lincoln Chafee (R), Jack Reed (D)⁶
- U.S. Representatives: Patrick J. Kennedy (D), James Langevin (D)⁷
- Capital: Providence⁸

Programs/Initiatives

- High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area (HIDTA)⁹
Designated in 1999, the New England HIDTA is responsible for areas in Massachusetts, Connecticut, Vermont, Maine, New Hampshire, and Providence County in Rhode Island.

Federal Funding

- Drug-Free Communities Support Program grantees in Rhode Island:¹⁰
 - FY 2002: no grantees
 - FY 2001: \$87,287 awarded to the Nickerson Community Center, Providence
 - FY 2000: no grantees
 - FY 1999: no grantees
 - FY 1998: \$100,000 awarded to the Mayor's Council on Drug and Alcohol Abuse, Providence
- Executive Office for Weed and Seed¹¹
Two sites in Rhode Island have received funding and official recognition as Federal Weed and Seed sites: Pleasant View (Pawtucket) and Olneyville (Providence).
- FY 2002/2003 Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Formula and Discretionary Grant Summary for Rhode Island:¹²
 - Formula Funding - \$8,808,616
 - Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant - \$6,577,245
 - Community Mental Health Services Block Grant - \$1,531,371
 - Projects for Assistance in Transition from Homelessness (PATH) - \$300,000
 - Protection and Advocacy Formula Grant - \$400,000

- Discretionary Funding - \$9,593,890
 - Mental Health - \$3,261,176
 - Substance Prevention - \$3,050,000
 - Substance Abuse Treatment - \$3,282,714
- Total Mental Health Funds: \$5,492,547
- Total Substance Abuse Funds: \$12,909,959
- Total Funds for Rhode Island: \$18,402,506
- FY 2003 Byrne Formula Grant Program amounts awarded to Rhode Island: 2,795,951¹³
- FY 1996-2003 Residential Substance Abuse Treatment (RSAT) for State Prisoners Formula Grant amount allocated to Rhode Island:
 - FY 1996: \$135,559¹⁴
 - FY 1997: \$150,691¹⁵
 - FY 1998: \$321,063¹⁶
 - FY 1999: \$317,155¹⁷
 - FY 2000: \$308,852¹⁸
 - FY 2001: \$303,355¹⁹
 - FY 2002: \$332,400²⁰
 - FY 2003: \$307,368²¹
- There were no Rhode Island recipients of the FY 2002 Office of Justice Programs Drug Court Discretionary Grant.²²
- There were no Rhode Island recipients of the FY 2002 funding available from the Department of Justice's Office of Community Oriented Policing Services (COPS) to fight methamphetamine.²³
- FY 2001 Housing and Urban Development Federally-Assisted Low Income Drug Elimination grants received in Rhode Island:²⁴
 - \$125,000 to Southlawn Palms Apartments, Providence

Crime and Drug-Related Crime

- During 2002, there were 38,380 crime index offenses known to police in Rhode Island.²⁵

Number of Index Offenses Known to Police, Rhode Island, 2000-2002

Offense	2000	2001	2002
Murder	45	39	41
Rape	412	416	394
Robbery	922	986	916
Aggravated assault	1,742	1,844	1,699
Burglary	6,620	6,824	6,414
Larceny-theft	22,038	23,875	24,043
Motor vehicle theft	4,665	5,043	4,873
Total index offenses	36,445	39,027	38,380

- There were 647 total arrests for the sale/manufacturing of opium or cocaine in Rhode Island during 2002.²⁶

Number of Arrests for Sale/Manufacturing Drug Offenses, Rhode Island, 2002

Type of Drug Involved	Juvenile	Adult	Total
Opium or cocaine	38	609	647
Marijuana	59	294	353
Synthetic narcotics	2	16	18
Other dangerous non-narcotic drugs	7	33	40
Total sale/manufacturing arrests	106	952	1,058

- There were 2,103 total arrests for the possession of marijuana in Rhode Island during 2002.²⁷

Number of Arrests for Possession Drug Offenses, Rhode Island, 2002

Type of Drug Involved	Juvenile	Adult	Total
Opium or cocaine	45	899	944
Marijuana	511	1,592	2,103
Synthetic narcotics	2	13	15
Other dangerous non-narcotic drugs	11	103	114
Total possession arrests	569	2,607	3,176

Drugs

- Cocaine

Cocaine is the primary drug of choice in Rhode Island. High quality cocaine with a purity of 60-90% is available in the State.²⁸ During the first quarter of 2003, powder cocaine sold for \$23,000-\$28,000 per kilogram; \$900-\$1,000 per ounce; and \$90-\$100 per gram. Crack cocaine during this same time period sold for \$1,000-\$1,500 per ounce and \$20-\$50 per rock. Cocaine is more frequently associated with violent crime than any other illicit drug in the State.²⁹

- Heroin

Heroin is widely available in Rhode Island and purity levels are high. During 2001, purity levels of heroin submitted to the DEA Northeast Laboratory reached as high as 94%.³⁰ During the first quarter of 2003, heroin sold for \$70,000-\$90,000 per kilogram; \$2,000-\$3,000 per ounce; \$70-\$300 per gram and \$6-\$10 per bag. South American heroin is readily available and Southeast Asian heroin also is available, although to a lesser extent.³¹

- Marijuana

Marijuana is readily available in all areas of Rhode Island. Most of the marijuana found in the State is Mexican. However, limited amounts of marijuana from other countries as well as domestic marijuana are used to supplement the Mexican marijuana. Hydroponically produced and BC Bud marijuana are also available.³² During the first quarter of 2003, commercial grade marijuana sold for \$850-\$1,000 per kilogram; \$90-\$100 per ounce; \$25-\$50 per gram; and \$5 per joint. During this same time period, sinsemilla sold for \$3,000-\$5,000 per pound; \$300-\$500 per ounce; and \$15-\$20 per joint.³³

- **Methamphetamine**
Methamphetamine is not commonly abused in Rhode Island and is not considered a significant threat to the State.³⁴
- **Club Drugs**
An increase in the use of club drugs has been noticed in Rhode Island. Nearly all local police departments in the State have reported an increase in MDMA, GHB, and ketamine use and availability.³⁵ During 2003, LSD sold for \$130 per one hundred doses and \$5 per dosage unit. Ketamine sold for \$75 to \$100 per vial and \$20 per 0.2 grams in 2003.³⁶
- **Diverted Pharmaceuticals**
OxyContin is the most popular pharmaceutical substance abused in the State. Fraudulent prescriptions, doctor shopping, pharmacy break-ins, and hospital thefts are all methods used to obtain the drug.³⁷ Other pharmaceuticals commonly diverted include hydrocodone (Vicodin), hydromorphone (Dilaudid), and methylphenidate (Ritalin). OxyContin street prices vary depending on geographic location, although the drug is usually sold for \$0.50 to \$1 per milligram.³⁸
- According to 1999-2000 data from the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, less than half (38.17%) of Rhode Island citizens ages 12 and older felt that smoking marijuana once a month posed a great risk.³⁹

Percent of Citizens Reporting Drug Use, by Age, Rhode Island, 1999-2000 Data

	12-17	18-25	26 +	All ages
Past month use of any illicit drug	12.64%	24.46%	5.19%	8.12%
Past month use of marijuana	10.35	21.79	4.70	7.20
Past month use of illicit drug other than marij.	5.14	7.30	1.81	2.77
Past year cocaine use	1.47	5.96	1.11	1.69
Great risk of smoking marijuana once a month	32.43	19.33	41.61	38.17

- According to 2000 data from the National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, approximately 1% of Rhode Island citizens reported past year dependence on illicit drugs.⁴⁰

Percent of Citizens Reporting Alcohol/Drug Dependence, Rhode Island, 2000

	12-17	18-25	26 +	All ages
Illicit drug dependence	2.22%	4.42%	0.63%	1.23%
Illicit drug dependence or abuse	4.86	5.75	0.99	1.93
Alcohol dependence	1.84	5.48	1.91	2.31
Alcohol dependence or abuse	5.96	17.15	4.89	6.40
Alcohol or illicit drug dependence or abuse	8.24	19.85	5.43	7.36

Juveniles

- More than half (53.7%) of Rhode Island male high school students reported using marijuana at least once during their lifetimes.⁴¹

Percent of High School Students Reporting Drug Use, by Gender, Rhode Island, 2001

	Female	Male	Total
Lifetime marijuana use	42.7%	53.7%	48.3%
Current marijuana use	29.4	36.4	33.2
Lifetime cocaine use	7.8	11.8	9.9
Current cocaine use	3.6	7.2	5.5
Lifetime inhalant use	8.9	14.6	11.8
Current inhalant use	2.3	6.9	4.7
Lifetime heroin use	1.9	5.9	4.0
Lifetime methamphetamine use	5.6	11.4	8.6
Lifetime illegal steroid use	2.1	8.3	5.4
Lifetime injecting illegal drug use	1.0	5.6	3.5
Tried marijuana before age 13	8.2	17.2	12.8

- Approximately 60% of Rhode Island high school seniors reported using marijuana at least once during their lifetimes.⁴²

Percent of High School Students Reporting Drug Use, by Grade, Rhode Island, 2001

Drug Type and Use	9th Grade	10th Grade	11th Grade	12th Grade
Lifetime marijuana use	40.1%	44.7%	51.4%	60.3%
Current marijuana use	29.2	27.6	33.8	44.3
Lifetime cocaine use	9.5	8.3	10.2	11.1
Current cocaine use	6.7	5.6	4.4	3.7
Lifetime inhalant use	15.4	8.6	12.0	9.8
Current inhalant use	7.5	3.9	3.1	2.7
Lifetime heroin use	4.6	5.0	3.3	1.6
Lifetime methamphetamine use	6.8	7.5	8.2	11.7
Lifetime illegal steroid use	6.7	6.2	3.9	3.0
Lifetime injecting illegal drug use	4.0	3.3	3.2	1.8

- During 2002, there were 7,808 juvenile arrests in Rhode Island.⁴³

Number of Juvenile Arrests, Selected Offenses, Rhode Island, 2002

Offense Type	2002
Murder and non-negligent manslaughter	7
Forcible rape	23
Robbery	72
Aggravated assault	186
Burglary-breaking or entering	319
Larceny-theft	1,075
Motor vehicle theft	163
Arson	85
Total juvenile arrests	7,808

Enforcement

- As of October 31, 2001, there were 3,070 full-time law enforcement employees in Rhode Island (2,439 officers and 631 civilians).⁴⁴
- Narcotics and Organized Crime Unit⁴⁵
The Narcotics and Organized Crime Unit of the Rhode Island Department of the Attorney General is responsible for the investigative management of narcotics, organized crime, and asset forfeiture cases.

Trafficking and Seizures

- Rhode Island is often used as a transshipment point for drugs distributed throughout New England.⁴⁶
- The majority of the cocaine found in Rhode Island is transported into the State by local suppliers who travel to New York and return to distribute the product. Cocaine also arrives in Rhode Island by tractor-trailers originating on the Mexican border.⁴⁷
- Dominican criminal groups are the primary wholesale and retail distributors of heroin in Rhode Island. Colombian criminal groups distribute wholesale quantities of heroin. African American and Hispanic criminal groups and gangs distribute heroin at the retail level.⁴⁸
- Dominican criminal groups in Rhode Island primarily distribute powder cocaine, although Colombian criminal groups also distribute the drug at the wholesale level.⁴⁹
- There is not a specific group that controls the distribution of marijuana in Rhode Island. Caucasian criminal groups, Dominican, Jamaican, Mexican and other Hispanic criminal groups distribute marijuana at the wholesale level in the State. African American, Caucasian, and Hispanic criminal groups, local independent dealers, outlaw motorcycle gangs (OMGs), and street gangs distribute marijuana at the retail level in Rhode Island.⁵⁰
- During 2002, Federal agencies seized nearly 2.9 kilograms of cocaine in Rhode Island.⁵¹

Amount of Drugs Seized by Federal Agencies, Rhode Island, 2002

Drug Type	Amount Seized (in kilograms)
Cocaine	2.9
Heroin	0.5
Methamphetamine	0
Marijuana	0.6

- In July 2001, the Providence Resident Office of the DEA seized the first operational MDMA lab in the State. The lab had been operating for approximately two months and was capable of producing thousands of tablets.⁵²
- During 2002, there were 551 total cultivated marijuana plants eradicated and seized in Rhode Island under the DEA's Domestic Cannabis Eradication/Suppression Program.⁵³

Number of Marijuana Plants Eradicated and Seized, Rhode Island, 2002

<u>Outdoor Operations</u>		<u>Indoor Operations</u>		Total Plants Eradicated
Plots Eradicated	Cultivated Plants Eradicated	Grows Seized	Plants Eradicated	
17	551	N/A	N/A	551

Courts

- Drug Courts⁵⁴
As of May 2003, there were 7 drug courts in Rhode Island, all of which had been recently implemented.
- During FY 2001, 39.2% of the Federally sentenced defendants in Rhode Island had committed drug offenses. Forty percent of the drug offenses involved crack cocaine.⁵⁵

Federal Sentencing Statistics, Drug Offenses, Rhode Island, FY 2001

Drug Type	Offenses	% of Total
Crack cocaine	16	40.0%
Powder cocaine	10	25.0
Heroin	7	17.5
Marijuana	6	15.0
Methamphetamine	0	0.0
Other drug	1	2.5

Corrections

- Approximately 5% (\$6,928,114) of the Rhode Island Department of Corrections expenditures in FY 2002 were for Institutional Rehabilitative and Educational Services, which includes the following programs: education, substance abuse services, sex offender treatment, psychology services, AIDS counseling, correctional industries/vocation education and recreation, and chaplaincy.⁵⁶
- As of December 31, 2002, there were 25,914 persons on probation and 422 persons on parole in Rhode Island.⁵⁷
- Of the 2,841 sentenced prisoners in Rhode Island during 2002, 606 had committed a drug offense.⁵⁸

Sentenced Population, Rhode Island, 2002

Offense Type	Male	Female	Total
Violent	1,009	28	1,037
Sex	329	1	330
Breaking and entering	198	7	205
Drug	577	29	606
Nonviolent	572	91	663
Total	2,685	156	2,841

- During 2002, there were 153 drug offenders awaiting trial in Rhode Island.⁵⁹

Number of Offenders Awaiting Trial, Rhode Island, 2002

Offense Type	Male	Female	Total
Violent	234	16	250
Sex	41	0	41
Breaking and entering	47	3	50
Drug	139	14	153
Nonviolent	103	16	119
Total	564	49	613

Treatment

- During 2001, there were 13,420 admissions to drug and alcohol treatment programs in Rhode Island.⁶⁰
- During 2002, there were 13,024 admissions to drug and alcohol treatment programs in Rhode Island.⁶¹

Number of Admissions to Treatment, Rhode Island, 2001-2002

Drug Type	2001		2002	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Alcohol only	2,386	17.8%	2,554	19.6%
Alcohol with secondary drug	2,272	16.9	2,201	16.9
Cocaine – smoked	1,128	8.4	1,149	8.8
Cocaine – other route of administration	361	2.7	363	2.8
Marijuana	1,624	12.1	1,745	13.4
Heroin	5,037	37.5	4,290	32.9
Other opiates	494	3.7	580	4.5
PCP	2	0.0	2	0.0
Hallucinogens	14	0.1	18	0.1
Amphetamines	16	0.1	21	0.2
Other stimulants	3	0.0	--	0.0
Tranquilizers	37	0.3	52	0.4
Sedatives	8	0.1	12	0.1
Inhalants	7	0.1	8	0.1
Other	31	0.2	29	0.2
Total admissions	13,420	100.0	13,024	100.0

Sources

¹ U.S. Census Bureau Web site: <http://www.census.gov>

² Rhode Island Governor's Web site: <http://www.governor.ri.gov/>

³ Rhode Island Lt. Governor's Web site: <http://www.ltgov.ri.gov/>

⁴ Rhode Island Attorney General Web site: <http://www.riag.ri.gov/>

⁵ Rhode Island Secretary of State Web site: <http://www.state.ri.us/>

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This State Profile was prepared by the ONDCP Drug Policy Information Clearinghouse. The Clearinghouse is funded by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy and is a component of the [National Criminal Justice Reference Service](#). For further information concerning the contents of this profile or other drug policy issues contact:

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